

How to Plan the Perfect Adirondacks Vacation in Any Season — Charming Towns and Gorgeous Hikes Included

Here's where to eat, sleep, and play in the Adirondacks.

By [Anne Olivia Bauso](#) | Updated on September 28, 2022

The Adirondacks. Even among New Yorkers, the word can bear confusion. Does it refer to the famous upstate New York wilderness, the mountains of the same name, or the region at large? Answer: all of the above. There's Adirondack Park, the largest wilderness preserve in the lower 48, whose boundaries are essentially the same as those of the glacier-carved mountains called the Adirondacks. Both the park and the mountain group are considered New York's Adirondacks region.

A special mix of public and private land, the park is a "forever wild" forest preserve created by the state in 1892. At six million acres, Adirondack Park is bigger than Grand Canyon, Great Smoky Mountains, and Yosemite national parks put together — and then some. Within its borders are rural small towns; thousands of miles of hiking trails, from simple walks in the woods to strenuous High Peaks circuits; and plenty of freshwater lakes, ponds, and rivers begging for a dip, a kayak or canoe trip, or a day of fishing. And it's all free to explore — no national parks-style fees or passes required.

There are scores of sleepy hamlets, thriving villages, and gorgeous vacation areas to make your Adirondacks home base — here, we break down some of the most popular. Consider this guide a springboard for an awesome, nature-immersed Adirondacks getaway.

Saranac Lake has a good mix of camping options, quaint inns, and cottage and cabin rentals. You'll even find campsites on Saranac Lake's islands, accessible only by boat and bookable through [ReserveAmerica.com](https://www.reserveamerica.com). For a more traditional stay, check out the LEED-certified [Saranac Waterfront Lodge](#) or the [Hotel Saranac](#), a 1920s landmark with a cozy Great Hall bar below a wonderfully ornate ceiling that looks straight out of an Italian palazzo. Or, go big at [The Point](#), a majestic property originally built in the early '30s as Camp Wonundra – William Rockefeller Jr.'s Great Camp – and eventually the first Relais & Chateaux hotel in North America.

